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Garth Ennis Darick Robertson

The BOYS™

TWENTY-THREE

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The BOYS™

TWENTY-THREE

In a world where costumed heroes soar through the sky and masked vigilantes prowl the night, someone's got to make sure the "supes" don't get out of line. And someone will.

Billy Butcher, Wee Hughie, Mother's Milk, The Frenchman and The Female are The Boys: a CIA-backed team of very dangerous people, each one dedicated to the struggle against the most lethal force on Earth- superpower. Some superheroes have to be watched. Some have to be controlled. And some of them- sometimes- need to be taken out of the picture.

That's when you call in **The Boys**.

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WHAT THE HELL DO THEY WANT THESE FOR...?

SEARCH ME.

THEY WANT SIX ALTOGETHER, PLUS SIX STINGERS, PLUS TWO DOZEN SAWS AN' TEN THOUSAND ROUNDS OF FIVE-FIVE-SIX D.U.. ALL TO BE CHECKED, PREPPED AND SHIPPED TO THE RED RIVER FACILITY INSIDE FORTY-EIGHT HOURS.

YOU WANNA GIMME A HAND HERE, OR ARE WE JUST GONNA WAIT FOR THE GODDAMN THING TO LIFT ITSELF?

M2A1 FLAMETHROWER

4

FUCK, MAN, D.U....I DON'T WANNA BE HANDLIN' THAT SHIT...

DEPLETED URANIUM.

YEAH, THAT'S WHAT THEY TELL YOU--!

THEY'RE NOT THE ONES GOTTA LOAD IT INTO THE BELTS.

NOT THE ONES GONNA BE GROWIN' AN EXTRA COCK, OR SOMETHIN'.

SO WHADDAYA SUPPOSE THEY'RE DOIN' WITH ALL THIS STUFF, ANYHOW?

SAID I DUNNO. MUSTN'T'VE BEEN LISTENIN' AT THE LAST BOARD MEETIN'.

ALL THEY WANT IS *SAWS?* NO M16s OR MP5s OR NOTHIN'?

THAT'S WHAT IT SAYS.

MAN, THEY ARE GONNA BE PUTTIN' OUT A LOTTA FIRE. LIKE A FUCKIN' BLIZZARD.

AN' I MEAN *FLAMETHROWERS,* MAN, DO THE ARMY EVEN USE THOSE THINGS ANYMORE?

GODDAMN THINGS GIVE ME THE CREEPS...

I MEAN YOU KNOW IN WAR MOVIES, WHEN THE GUY WITH THE FLAMETHROWER--OKAY, HE'S PROBABLY FRIED ABOUT A HUNDRED JAPS OR KRAUTS FIRST, BUT WHEN HE TAKES A BULLET? HE GOES UP LIKE THE FUCKIN' FOURTH OF JULY, MAN.

I MEAN THOSE THINGS'RE A GODDAMN DEATH SENTENCE, LIKE BEIN' BURNED ALIVE'S GOTTA BE THE WORST WAY TO GO IN THE WORLD...

STARTIN' TO LOOK PRETTY GOOD FROM WHERE I'M STANDIN'.

HUH?

I SAID JUST BE CAREFUL WHEN YOU'RE GASSIN' 'EM UP, YOU'RE WORRIED ABOUT 'EM.

YEAH.

FUCKIN' FLAMETHROWERS, MAN.

SOMEONE WANTS SOMEBODY *GONE.*

VOUGHT AMERICAN

VOUGHT AMERICAN

WE GOTTA GO NOW

part one

I'VE TO GET UP.

I'VE GOTTA GET GOIN', HEN.

MM...?

MMM.

THAT WAS NICE, LAST NIGHT.

MMM.

D'YOU LIKE IT?

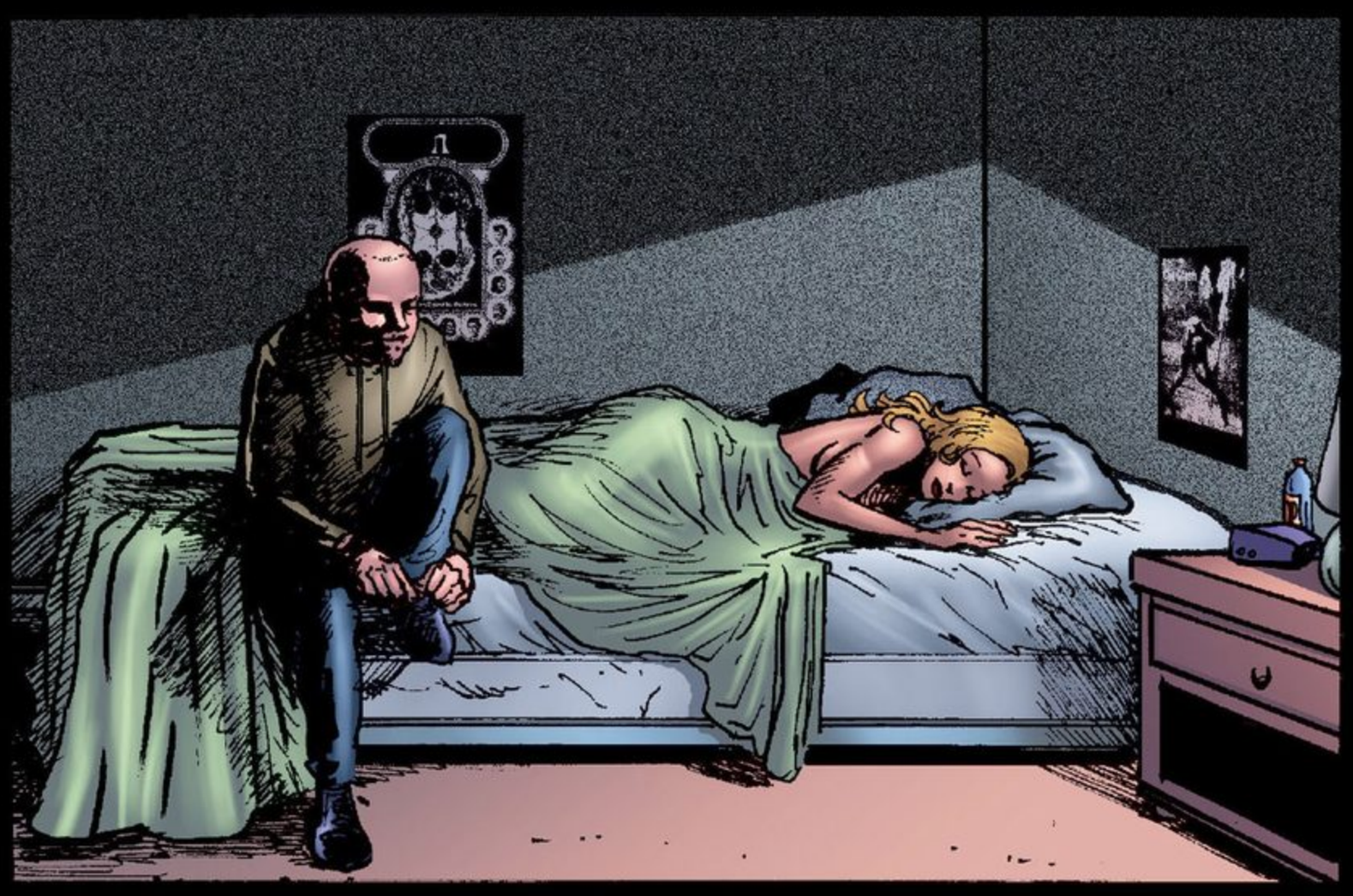
MM-*HM*...

ME TOO.

NO WEE SURPRISES THIS TIME.

MMMF--!

NUTTER CHUNX



AW, NO...!

WHO IS IT'S WANKIN' UNDER MY DOOR?

AN' WHY IS THERE ALWAYS BLOOD IN IT?

MORNIN', MISTER POTAMUS...
UH.
RAMIT HOME

MOONSTAR DINER
BREAKFAST LUNCH
PASTA COCKTAILS
LOOK AT ME.
LOOK AT ME.
LEFT OUTSIDE WITH THE FUCKING DOG...!
BECAUSE THAT ASSHOLE THINKS ITS F--
NNNNNHHH
NNNNNHHH

THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH THE G-MEN.

THEY'RE ARSEHOLES?

NO, I MEAN THERE'S SOMETHING GENUINELY WRONG...

SO DO I. THEY'RE ARSEHOLES.

WILL YOU GROW UP, FOR CHRIST'S SAKE? SILVER KINCAID KILLED HERSELF YESTERDAY MORNING.

YOU'RE JOKIN'...

SHE SHOWED UP IN WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS, LITTLE NOTHING TOWN CALLED CRANBROOK. NO ONE HAS ANY IDEA WHY.

DO YOU HAPPEN TO KNOW WHAT HER... POWERS OR WHATEVER, WHAT IT IS THEY ACTUALLY INVOLVE?

GRAVITY, INNIT? OR IS IT?

SOMETHIN' TO DO WITH CONTROLLIN' PRESSURE...?

"WELL, WHATEVER IT IS: YESTERDAY SHE USED IT ON HERSELF."

"SHE WASN'T WEARING ANY KIND OF COSTUME, SO NOBODY ACTUALLY I.D.ED HER 'TIL AFTERWARDS. BUT SHE WAS STRIKING ENOUGH TO MAKE AN IMPRESSION."

EXCUSE ME, MA'AM?

AH, WE GOT A CALL...WELL, I UNDERSTAND YOU BEEN STANDING HERE FOR SOME TIME, I GUESS SOME FOLKS WERE A LITTLE CONCERNED...

DO YOU NEED HELP WITH SOMETHING? IS THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO FOR YOU?

WHERE'S UNCLE PAUL?

'BEG YOUR PARDON, MA'AM?

JESUS!

OH SHIT--
OH MY FUCKIN'
CHRIST--!

NO...!

HOW D'YOU KNOW SHE DONE IT TO HERSELF?

PARTLY THE OFFICER'S DESCRIPTION OF HER DEMEANOUR AND ACTIONS. PARTLY BECAUSE IT MATCHES WHAT SHE'S KNOWN TO HAVE DONE TO SEVERAL OTHER INDIVIDUALS.

THAT'S WHEN SHE WAS COVERTLY TERMINATING OFF-MESSAGE SUPES FOR VOUGHT, OF COURSE, AS OPPOSED TO HOISTING TRUCKS OFF SCHOOL BUSES FOR CNN.

SO...

IT GETS CALLED IN AS A CODE V, AND WE SCRAMBLE A RECOVERY TEAM AS SOON AS WE GET WORD. THEY REACH CRANBROOK JUST UNDER TWO HOURS LATER.

UNFORTUNATELY THEY'RE LEFT WITH PRECISELY DICK, BECAUSE SOMEHOW--EITHER BECAUSE WE'VE BEEN COMPROMISED TO A DEGREE I DON'T WANT TO THINK ABOUT, BUT MORE LIKELY BECAUSE OF THE LOCAL ***CRETIN*** WHO FILMED THE BODY ON HIS PHONE AND PUT THE FOOTAGE ON YOUTUBE--***SOMEHOW,*** VOUGHT ARRIVE FIRST. NOT THAT WE CAN PROVE IT, BUT THEY SHOW FAKED COPIES OF OUR I.D. AND CLAIM THE REMAINS IN THE NAME OF NATIONAL SECURITY.

YES, I HAD A FEELING YOU'D FIND THAT PART AMUSING...

CHEEKY FUCKERS.

ALL RIGHT, YOU SAID THERE WAS SOMETHIN' WRONG WITH THE G-MEN. THAT'S JUST ONE OF 'EM.

ONE OF THE ORIGINALS. A LEADING MEMBER OF THE FIRST TEAM--THE ACTUAL G-MEN, NOT G-FORCE OR THE G-BRITS OR ANY OF THE OTHERS.

AND SHE PUBLICLY TOOK HER OWN LIFE.

I KNOW THESE TEAMS GENERATE THE MOST REVENUE, BUT THEY ALSO CAUSE THE MOST TROUBLE. ALWAYS IN THE SPOTLIGHT. ALWAYS FOR THE WRONG REASONS.

HOW OFTEN HAVE THEY TURNED ON EACH OTHER, CIVILIAN EYEWITNESSES BE DAMNED? HOW MANY HAVE VOUGHT TAKEN OUT OF THE PICTURE--SIX OR SEVEN THAT WE KNOW OF? WHY IS THAT RIDICULOUS FEUD OVER ***2-KOOL*** ALLOWED TO GO ON BETWEEN G-STYLE AND G-COAST?

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT ***IS*** ABOUT THEM...!

YOU DON'T THINK YOU'VE ANSWERED YOUR OWN QUESTION?

A BAD BOY IMAGE IS ONE THING. SUICIDE'S SOMETHING ELSE ENTIRELY.

I THINK IT'S TIME FOR A SERIOUS LOOK AT VOUGHT'S NUMBER ONE MONEYMAKER, AND I THINK SILVER KINCAID IS THE WAY IN...

WELL AS IT HAPPENS--***MRMFF***--

I'VE HAD THE NEW LAD READIN' UP ON THE G-TWATS RECENTLY. PARTA HIS TOUR 'ROUND THE FOUR-COLOR FUCKWITS.

THEN YOU CAN GO STRAIGHT TO WORK.

THOUGHT MANAGEMENT WAS THE NAME A' THE GAME THESE DAYS...?

SO MANAGE.

RIGHT YOU ARE.

THINK YOU'RE GONNA MAKE IT, THEN?

MEANING?

YOU KNOW, GET OUT THE DOOR BEFORE THE INEVITABLE HAPPENS AN' YOU END UP GIVIN' MY NOB A POLISH?

I MEAN I'M FUCKIN' LOVIN' THE NEW ROUTINE. BREAKFAST MEETIN'. PUBLIC PLACE. NOT EVEN A WHIFF A' TEMPTATION.

IS THAT WHY YOU BROUGHT MONKEY ALONG, IS HE MEANT TO BE YOUR CHAPERONE--?

NEW DEPTHS. VERY IMPRESSIVE.

OR IT WOULD BE IF YOU WEREN'T SO COMPLETELY PATHETIC.

LET'S SEE HOW WE'RE DOIN', SHALL WE?

MM--

YOU DIRTY SLAG, MADAM DIRECTOR.

MMM--!

YOUR KNICKERS'RE SOAKIN'.

RRRRRESSTROOMM...

YOU REALLY ARE A *FUCKING BASTARD--*

I'M JUST HONEST, LUV.

C'EST UN MAUVAIS SIGNE.

WHAT'S THE MATTER, FRENCHIE?

I THINK...

I THINK THE NEED TO HURT GROWS STRONG ONCE MORE.

IT WAS NOT HIROSHIMA, PETIT HUGHIE.

EH?

NEVER HIROSHIMA.

SO YOU TOLD THIS CHICK YOU SOME KINDA P.I., YEAH?

NO, AN INSURANCE INVESTIGATOR. NO' A DETECTIVE, THE WHOLE POINT'S TO MAKE IT *LESS* INTERESTIN'...

LIES AN' DECEIT, HUGHIE. KEY TO ANY SUCCESSFUL RELATIONSHIP.

...MORE LIKE SHITECRAWLER, IF YOU ASK ME.

RIGHT THEN.

GMEN AS OF 2/07

JOHN GODDCKIN

HERE'S THE WORLD'S MOST POPULAR OUTCASTS.

G-MEN

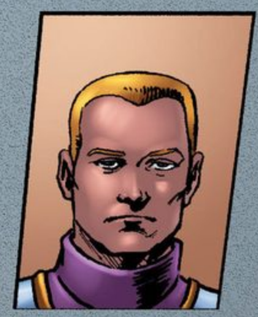
FIVE-OH

SILVER KINCAID

NUBIA(?)

GROUNDHAWK

CRITTER



THE DEVINE

G-FORCE

COLD SNAP

EUROPO

LUCKLESS

FLAMER

STACKER

PUSSPUSS

G-STYLE

KING HELMET

THE REPTILIAN

BORN FREE

PIT STOP

G-WIZ

THIS IS THE CURRENT STATE A' PLAY, ACCORDIN' TO THE LEGEND. SOME NEW FACES DOWN THE LOWER ENDA THE FOOD CHAIN. MOSTLY THE SAME OLD SHOWER.

WHAT ABOUT...?

EH?

AH, LEAVE HER, HUGHIE. SHE'S ALL RIGHT.

WHY DON'T YOU TELL US ALL THERE IS TO KNOW ABOUT THE G-MEN, THEN. SHOW US HOW MUCH YOU'VE LEARNED.

WELL, SEVEN TEAMS, EIGHTY PLUS INDIVIDUALS. THEY'RE... JUST ABOUT THE BIGGEST SUPES IN THE WORLD, I SUPPOSE...

NO' THE MOST POWERFUL, THOUGH IF YOU PUT ALL THE DIFFERENT TEAMS TOGETHER THEY MIGHT DO IT ON SHEER NUMBERS. AN' THEY'RE NO' EXACTLY WHAT YOU'D CALL A-LIST; THEY DON'T GET SAVED FOR SPECIAL OCCASIONS LIKE PAYBACK OR THE SEVEN.

BUT THEY'RE THE MOST ***VALUABLE.*** THEY'RE A FUCKIN' LICENSE TO PRINT MONEY, VOUGHT MAKE ABOUT A BILLION WORLDWIDE OFF THE COMICS ALONE-- YEARLY.

THEY'VE A SORTA REPUTATION AS...REBELS, THAT'S WHAT ACCOUNTS FOR THEIR POPULARITY. OUTSIDERS. RUNAWAYS, KIDS FROM THE WRONG SIDE O' THE TRACKS.

THE IDEA IS YOUR MAN THERE, ***GODOLKIN,*** HE GOT THE FIRST ONES TOGETHER WHEN THEY WERE ORPHANS. THEY GREW UP AN' WENT OUT LOOKIN' FOR MORE, TRYNNA HELP SUPE KIDS GETTIN' PICKED ON BY AUTHORITY...

AS OF 2/07

IT'S ALL BOLLOCKS, O' COURSE, THERE'S NO' ONE O' THEM ISN'T A MILLIONAIRE. I MEAN IT'S TRUE THEY'RE ORPHANS, OR THEY RAN AWAY FROM HOME, BUT THE CLOSEST THEY COME TO FIGHTIN' THE SYSTEM'S GETTIN' BAILED OUTTA JAIL BY VOUGHT'S LAWYERS.

ALL THEY REALLY DO'S THE USUAL SUPE SHITE, ONLY A BIT LESS DISCRETELY THAN MOST.

JOHN GODDLKIN

WELL, THAT'S ONE WAYA LOOKIN' AT IT. BIT LESS DISCRETELY, BUT A BIT MORE OFTEN, TOO.

AN' THEY'VE HAD A FEW'VE GONE OFF THE RAILS BIG TIME, WHICH IS ODD. USUALLY IT'S THE ONES ***CAN'T*** GET ONTO A TEAM GO MENTAL, BUT...

NUBIA?

EXACTLY, MATE.

COUPLA YEARS AGO THE BIG SLAPPER HERE GOT A BIT HANDY WITH THE LIGHTNIN' BOLTS, JUST DOWN THE ROAD FROM FUCKIN' THREE MILE ISLAND. NO ONE KNEW WHY, BUT IF THEY HADN'T BRUNG IN SILVER KINCAID TO COLLAPSE HER HEART IN HER CHEST...CHRIST, IT DON'T BEAR THINKIN' ABOUT.

SILVER KINCAID

NUBIA(?)

GROUNDHAWK

ALL HUSHED UP, OBVIOUSLY--OH, SPEAKIN' A' NUBIA: SHE'S BEEN ***SEEN.*** BREATHIN', IF NOT WALKIN' AN' TALKIN'.

NOW WE ALL KNOW WHAT THAT COULD MEAN, SO JUST BE READY FOR IT IF IT HAPPENS, ALL RIGHT?

ALL RIGHT.

THIS ONE'S ABOUT SURVEILLANCE, BOYS. TO BE HONEST WITH YOU, I DUNNO IF IT'S GONNA AMOUNT TO ANYTHING MORE THAN THAT--HUGHIE MIGHT BE BANG-ON, THERE MIGHT BE NO MORE TO THESE NOBBERS THAN WHAT IT SAYS ON THE SIDE A' THE TIN.

WE NEVER REALLY WENT AFTER 'EM FIRST TIME 'ROUND, FOR JUST THAT EXACT REASON...

ANYWAY: SURVEILLANCE.

FIRST SNAG IS GODOLKIN'S HOUSE ON LONG ISLAND BURNED DOWN LAST YEAR, AN' THAT TOOK CARE A' THE TWO OR THREE BUGS WE DID HAVE. WE DON'T HAVE THE ACCESS WE DO WITH THE SEVEN, SO GETTING 'EM INTO THE NEW GAFF WON'T BE EASY. SECURITY'S MEANT TO BE UNBELIEVABLE.

THIS MOB, ON THE OTHER HAND, ARE SHARIN' A HOUSE IN THE TOWN DOWN THE ROAD FROM GODOLKIN'S PLACE. THEY GO BACK AN' FORTH ALL THE TIME.

JUNIOR VERSION, REALLY. ANYONE JOININ' THE G-MEN STARTS WITH G-WIZ: YOU GOTTA LEARN THE ROPES BEFORE YOU CAN PLAY WITH THE BIG LADS.

FLAMER

G-WIZ

THEY JUST SEEM LIKE TEENAGE KIX ALL OVER AGAIN. FROM WHAT I WAS READIN', LIKE.

WELL, YOU COULD BE FORGIVEN FOR THINKIN' THAT, YEAH...

I MEAN THEY'RE TEENAGERS THE SAME WAY THE KIX ARE, IN THAT HALFA THEM'RE IN THEIR MID-TWENTIES. RIGHT LITTLE BLEEDIN' TEARAWAYS, TOO.

THING IS THEY ACTUALLY *LIKE* EACH OTHER, HUGHIE. DOESN'T SEEM TO LAST WHEN THEY JOIN THE SENIOR TEAMS, BUT THE WIZ ARE A CLOSE-KNIT BUNCH.

SO... HOW DO WE...?

WELL, WE GET A MAN ON THE INSIDE, HE JOINS G-WIZ, AN' THE FIRST TIME THEY GO UP TO GODOLKIN'S FOR G-CLASS HE PLANTS THE BUGS.

SIMPLE.

MAN ON THE *INSIDE?*

WHO?

CAN I HELP YOU...?

DELIVERY FOR QUEEN MAEVE.

OH, WELL SHE'S IN HER--

WE KNOW THE WAY.

OH, OKAY...CAN I ASK WHAT IT IS YOU'RE...

DELIVERING?

HELLO?

YEAH, HI, IS MISTER WALL THERE?

WHO? NO, THIS--

WELL HOW ABOUT MRS. WALL, IS SHE THERE?

NO--

ARE ANY OF THE WALLS THERE?

NO, LOOK, YOU'VE GOT THE WRONG--

THEN HOW THE FUCK DOES THE ROOF STAY UP, DOUCHEBAG?!

HA HA HA HA

HA HA HA HA

YOU FUCKING LITTLE COCKSUCKERS, I'M GOING TO FUCKING KILL YOU!!

NUMBER WITHHELD

YOU'RE DEAD, YOU LITTLE SHITS! I KNOW WHO YOU ARE! YOU'RE DEAD!

NO YOU DON'T, FRUITY!

YOU FUCKIN' FAGGOT, HOMELANDER!

ASS-PIRATE!

I'LL FUCKING FIND YOU FUCKING FUCK!

HHHH.

HOW DO THEY KEEP GETTING OUR *NUMBER*...?

HOW'S IT GOIN' IN THERE, HUGHIE?

FUCK OFF!

FRENCHIE, I WANT YOU AN' THE FEMALE UP THERE WITH HIM, ALL RIGHT? TWENTY-FOUR HOUR STANDBY.

OUI.

HE HITS THE PANIC BUTTON AN' YOU GO IN AN' GET HIM, I DON'T CARE HOW MANY A' THE TOSSERS YOU HAVE TO DENT.

BIEN SUR.

DO ME A FAVOR, MATE: NIP UP TO THIS CRANBROOK PLACE AN'--

I'M JUST THE FUCKIN' COMIC RELIEF AROUND HERE, AREN'T I?

THAT'S WHAT YOU GOT ME FOR, THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED ME TO JOIN. YOU NEEDED SOME POOR FUCKER TO LAUGH AT.

WELL, HERE WE GO, THEN. HA BLOODY HA. EVERYBODY LAUGH AT HUGHIE--

'CAUSE THAT'S THE REASON I'M HERE.

HA!!

OH, JESUS CHRIST--!

OH HUGHIE, I'M SORRY--

BUT YOU DON'T HALF LOOK LIKE A CUNT, MATE.

next: WHY PINTO? ERRP WHY NOT?